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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

SCARLET FEVER.—Some interesting deductions are stated in a paper in the *American Journal of Diseases of Children* on scarlet fever. Season does not influence morbidity, or the quality of the disease. The sexes as a whole show equal susceptibility. Under five years of age, boys are more susceptible; between five and fifteen, girls are more so. About half the cases occur in children between three and eight, and 90 per cent in those under fifteen. The younger the child, the less the chance for recovery. At all ages males succumb more readily than females. About two children out of three, between three and eight years of age, contract the disease when exposed to it for the first time.

DETERMINATION OF SEX.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* reporting some observations of a German physician related by a Danish contemporary, says it was found that in the cases recorded when conception occurred from the first day of menstruation to the ninth day the figures gave 37 boys and 7 girls; from the tenth to the fourteenth day, 4 boys and 8 girls; from the fifteenth to the twenty-second day, 3 boys and 20 girls. Females predominated as the time between menstruation and conception lengthened. The remaining six days of the period are not considered, the woman being regarded as temporarily sterile during this time.

SYMPTOMS INDICATIVE OF TUBERCULOSIS.—At a meeting of the Michigan State Medical Society, a member said the laity should be taught that any of the following symptoms should arouse their suspicions and cause them to seek advice. (1) A succession of colds without energy to overcome them. (2) Persistent loss of weight without explainable cause. (3) A general feeling of fatigue and malaise not explainable by normal exertion. (4) Flush of feverishness arising late in the afternoon. (5) Spitting of blood. (6) Persistent cough extending over a period of one month, especially if not preceded by nasal or throat symptoms. (7) Digestive disturbances, especially when accompanied by any of the foregoing. (8) Night sweats. The diagnosis of tuberculosis is a time-consuming business.

SULPHUR VAPOR FOR SCABIES.—The *British Medical Journal* gives a method of treatment used for soldiers afflicted with itch. The patient is given a hot bath, soaking for five minutes, and is then well rubbed

with soap, the skin being scrubbed to open the burrows. The patient is then transferred to a cabinet, a wet towel placed around the neck to prevent the escape of fumes, a sulphur candle placed in the corner of the box and lighted. An attendant remains near in case of the escape of fumes which might affect the breathing. At the end of fifty minutes, the patient returns to the bath room and puts on clean warm clothes. In two hundred cases only two relapsed, probably due to reinfection.

HORIZONTAL BATH FOR THE LEG.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* in a synopsis of a paper in an Italian contemporary says for some months a light bath tub has been in use, long enough and deep enough to permit the leg to rest in it, the limb being submerged from the toes to the hip as the man lies in bed. The opening for the leg is made very large with a waterproof cuff that fits tightly enough around the leg to prevent the leakage of water but not to impede the circulation. The mattress below this point is cut out. The tub can be made of metal, glass or wood, or be merely a portable frame for a rubber cloth tub. This permits a continuous lavage of wounds of the leg with some antiseptic fluid. Since the writer adopted this principle of treating war wounds of the extremities, he has not had to amputate either an arm or a leg, even in 95 cases of frozen feet with more or less extensive gangrene. When extension of the limb is necessary, rings are soldered to the inside of the bath tub at the foot for the attachment of the weights and pulleys. The immersion is continued for from five to ten hours a day.

DECREASE IN TYPHOID.—The state of California has reduced its typhoid death rate 70 per cent in the past ten years. It is stated that only one British officer at the front has died of typhoid and but a very small number of cases have occurred among the men.

PROPER CARE OF MILK.—The dairy specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture say the three important C's in the care of milk are to keep it Clean, Cold, Covered. Before opening a bottle of milk, wash the neck with clean, cold water.

EYE STRAIN.—A writer in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* says that any condition that disturbs the lateral balance of the eye muscles creates a tendency for the images of the two eyes to separate sideways, or to cross one another. The strain produced in maintaining fusion under these conditions leads very quickly to eye tire, to so-called sick headaches, or "bilious attacks" and, if uncorrected, to various forms of physical incapacity. Patients who develop headaches when motoring, shopping, and at moving pictures, those who are trainsick or peculiarly susceptible to seasickness, may refer

their ills to this cause. Relief may be obtained by properly-fitted glasses.

SODA WATER GLASSES.—The State Board of Health of Maryland has notified druggists and dispensers of soft drinks that glasses must not be used to serve drinks unless they are willing to destroy the glass after it has been used once.

CONTROL OF VENEREAL DISEASES.—Western Australia has passed a drastic act for the control of venereal disease. Free diagnosis and treatment are provided and the notification of the existence of a case and acceptance of treatment are compulsory. If there is risk of infection, arrest and detention for two weeks in hospital may follow and for a longer period if necessary, such treatment to be free. All proceedings are strictly private and it is unlawful for any newspaper to publish a report of them. Questionable advertisements are prohibited. The government issues a booklet on venereal diseases, so ignorance can not be pleaded as an excuse.

TRANSMISSION OF DISEASE BY INSECTS.—Mecurialis, an Italian physician, who lived as long ago as from 1530 to 1607, when Europe was being ravaged by the black death, or plague, wrote, "there can be no doubt that flies feed on the internal secretions of the diseased and dying, then, flying away they deposit their excretions on the food in neighboring dwellings and persons who eat it are thus infected."

FOOD CONSUMPTION OF BOYS.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* in an editorial, draws attention to an investigation as to the food consumption of the growing boy. It is stated to be 25 per cent above that of the adult. In an examination of the diet of 350 boys at a large private boarding school it was found that they consumed about 5000 calories a day, half as much again as a farmer at work is believed to require. The food included 193 separate varieties but twelve dietary items yielded 75 per cent of the requisite fuel value, and bread, butter, milk and sugar together furnished half of the food fuel.

DIGESTIBILITY OF EGG PROTEINS.—A writer in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* says that raw white of egg is indigestible and can be made digestible by coagulation by heat or chemical means. It sometimes causes diarrhoea. Only 50 per cent is utilized by the body. Egg yolk, either raw or cooked is excellently utilized. Raw eggs, egg white and albumin water are extensively prescribed, the writer thinks, without justification in their nutritive value or ease of assimilation